



Introduction—Extreme Cold and Winter Storms

A violent snowstorm can cause enormous damage to the people, buildings, and transportation of a community. The Blizzard of 1996, for example, caused \$3 billion in damage and 187 deaths in the Appalachians, Mid-Atlantic, and Northeast regions of the United States.

Although a heavy snowstorm is the most dramatic disaster associated with wintertime, extreme cold can challenge the resources of a community in various ways.

Other disasters may occur as an indirect result of low temperatures, such as flood (from burst water pipes) or fire (from a faulty chimney). Extreme cold can pose a significant threat to human health as well as to the structures of homes and buildings. It is important to be aware of the dangers of extreme cold even when a storm is not occurring.

The purpose of this section is to prepare a community for extreme cold and winter storms, offer precautionary steps to take during a storm, and discuss ways to ensure safety after a storm.

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